

奈須きのこ

Illustration / 武内崇

空の境界
the Garden of sinners / recalled our summer
未来福音

Mirai Fukuin – chapter 4

August 3 1999, 11:32 am. On the third floor of a shopping mall, a girl in Kimono appeared in chase of "him".

"....hey, I catch up with you, bomber."

She talked to her cell phone and dropped it. She drew a knife from her back and looked around carefully.

There were three bombs between me and her. Buckshot type bombs from three directions. She cannot escape from the dead end future.

The elevator opened and a child and his parents approached us. She glanced at them and I pushed the button.

In one second, Ryougi Shiki got 2mm metal balls all over her body and killed instantly.

Mirai Fukuin – chapter 1

It's a comfortable summer morning. My Reien women's school is an all-weather independent mobile fortress. Other students are fed up with the strict rules of the school but this is a dreamland for me because I had to work all day long in my family-business Sake cellar. I'm enjoying the summer vacation all alone in the dorm. But a call from my dad made me depressed. He told me to come back home. I've already foresaw the future last night. I saw a vision of me working in the Sake factory crying.

It's August 3, 9:30 am. At this point, my fate was nothing new just exactly what I saw three days ago.

Mirai Fukuin – chapter 2

"Mikiya-kun, do you know Mother Mifune?"

Aozaki Touko in dirty sooted dress asked me after the party celebrating the completion of a hotel, which our office was involved in the design.

August 3, fine. My investigation on Mother Mifune was failed and I'm on the way to a cafe, where I and Shiki will meet. Mother Mifune is a fortune-teller, having been popular a while ago. She was good at advising to avoid the danger in the future. She was praised to be a "100% hitter" but nobody has heard about her for two years.

In front of the cafe, I saw a girl almost crying held the arm by a man in his 30's. Seemed like she was imploring something to him. As I approached them, I remembered I was scolded by two people "How credulous of you!".

"Hi, excuse me. Is there anything wrong?"

"Who're you? Do you know her?"

"Sorry, I just passed by. Something trouble with her?"

"Nothing wrong with me. When I was walking here, this girl suddenly snapped at me."

"What?"

Contrary to my expectation, the girl picked a quarrel with the man. She shouted "You'll be in trouble if you have that bag!" and clung to his bag.

"Is that true?"

"Yes..."

"Hey, you see? I got troubled by this girl."

"B...But you'll be injured...um... have an accident...or minced by a dump truck!"

"Oh well, it's summer huh? You take care of her."

He left with square shoulders.

"Are you o.k.?"

"Thank you for mediation..but I have to stop him!"

"Hey wait. If you stop him again, he surely hits you."

"I know... but I cannot ignore him."

"That's impressive. But before you go, could you explain me why you think he will got in danger?"

"um...my intuition is always right. He will have an accident at the construction site around the corner... I felt."

I knew this determined face with hope to be believed and despair not to be believed.

Same as her face in the cold winter rain and crying "I can't ****!"

"I'll persuade him. Is it o.k. for you?"

"eh?"

"Stay here. I'll let you know if everything works fine."

"EHHHHH!"

I left her behind and chased the guy. If her story is correct, He is heading the street I came from.

Mirai Fukuin – chapter 3

After one hour ride on the but from Reien school, I was welcomed by the strong summer sunlight, the busy street noises, and the vision of an unknown man sandwiched between a utility pole and a dump truck.

I almost fainted with the vision of death. I saw the future and the present separately. It's vague which time I'm in.

I forced myself to restart breathing. Detest, moral, moderation, braveness... all kinds of fear choked my throat. The guy walked away. What should I do? If I'm not involved, I don't have to worry about the result...but!

"Hey! Wait! You! With that large bag."

"Ah? Is that about me?"

My head got white out. But I confronted the man bringing all of my courage to my throat.

And the outcome was total failure, as usual. But suddenly a strange guy broke in.

"Hey, excuse me. Is there anything wrong?"

I was half relieved and half amazed at this ridiculously good natured man. It was more unrealistic words than any foresights.

After a short quarrel, I was left with the "strange" guy. He asked me why. I made a stupid excuse. I didn't want to be laughed at, but I would rather die if he despises me. ... he left chasing the man and I stood stunned in the middle of the street. I came to with an exploding sound.

"eh, Ehhhhhh!"

I didn't see such a big accident. My legs shook with fear and nausea...

"It was close. Your prediction was right."

The guy with black glasses said to me with a peaceful voice.

"He is fine except for some scratches."

He had a long scratches in his left arm, but he seemed nothing care about it.

"He may be grateful to you now."

He proudly praised my ridiculous complacency. I burst into crying.

"Eh? hey, what's wrong?"

That's the fateful meeting of me, Seo Shizune, and Kokuto Mikiya.

Mirai Fukuin (fake) - Chapter 1

Kuramitsu Meruka is a professional bomber. His jobs are not intended to kill people.

He explodes a building or a property and ruins a show by causing a panic.

"There is neither expectation nor hope in the future"

He can literally see the future. Once he sees a future of a successful mission with his right eye, his left eye tells him the way how to bring about the future. This power took humanity from his mind. There is no value in the present. He got bored with life, isolated from the society and became an anonymous bomber, who receives orders on the cell phone and completes the jobs without being caught by the police.

"Hey, it's dangerous there."

Is it a blessing or punishment from the God that he met her?

It was a simple job to spoil a completion party of a hotel. He followed what his left eye saw and the hotel was covered with black smoke as his right eye saw.

Five minutes before the explosion, he visited the garden of the hotel to check the "future" was correct and the girl warned him. Feeling slight incongruity and curiosity, he left there after checking the explosion. Meruka examined the participants of the party and found out the name of the girl, Ryougi Shiki. He couldn't resist knowing whether he can kill her or not.

Mirai Fukuin (fake) - Chapter 2

"A bomber is after you!?"

Touko seemed like not believing her at all.

Shiki already regretted having consulted with Touko.

"rather kind of stalking me. I haven't talked about this to Mikiya, though."

"I see. You got his attention in the hotel case. Are you born under a star attracting strange people?"

"It's not funny. Take a look at this. He mailed me a direct cell phone."

These three days after the explosion in the hotel, Shiki had already attacked three times.

"So he couldn't be silent seeing you in one piece. Have you gotten a call?"

"Not yet, btw I felt something strange with this bomber."

"For what?"

"As for the third time attack, I dropped in the ruin building out of caprice. Just when I entered a room on the second floor, a toy clock ticked at the midnight and it exploded."

Touko got interested in the bomber and Shiki described the bomber as "a living dead".

Touko couldn't understand what she meant by that, but she felt something from his "extraordinary foresight".

"He can be a typical psychic of prescience."

"I got the cigar, boss. You want 'Peace', right?"

Kokuto was back in the good time.

Shiki sighed to see Touko pleasingly receive the cigar box from him.

Next day, August 3

Shiki and Mikiya looked for Mother Mifune.

"It's highly unlikely she was involved in the case, but you need to meet her, Shiki.

You will grasp what kind of person a psychic with prescience is."

As Touko expected, Shiki met her in the narrow passage between buildings.

"Don't fool me. I'm working for the dream of the young like loves and dreams. I don't have any word to a murder-philic like you."

"Alright. That's enough for me. I got an idea what a future-teller is like."

"What a naughty kid. What can you understand about me? I can tell you everything about your lover whom you are struggling with all of your strength."

"!"

She frowned with seethe of killing this woman, but she didn't try to see her death.

"Oh, you have unexpectedly tender mind. I can do fortune telling for you. It's my treat."

"No, thanks. Live long, old lady, It's dangerous around here."

"That's too bad. Btw, a bridge is an unlucky place for you. Take care. You won't be killed with that, though."

Mirai Fukuin (fake) - Chapter 3

When Shiki left the fortune teller, an unfamiliar ring tone sounded.

"Hello. Nice to meet you, Ryougi-san."

It was impossible to hear out the age and sex of the caller due to the voice changer.

"Who knows? You have been watching me, huh?"

"No way. I just set the bomb. No need to show you myself. I'm talking from an apartment room far away."

"You liar. Alright, what's the matter, then? I have nothing to talk with you."

"Do you realize I'm after your life? Why don't you ask me why?"

"Do you answer if I ask? Shut up. I'm not interested in you, dead man. If you keep on doing this shit, I'll just smash the bug up."

".....I didn't see why you have that strong confidence."

The voice sounds weak but also pleased with Shiki's reply.

Meruka was watching the future with his right eye. Shiki will be blown up by the bomb on the truck parked on the bridge.

"Do you think you not gonna be dead? The future is on your side, or something?"

"Well, I don't know until the time comes. At least I'm alive right now."

"You'll be dead. Blown by the bomb. You cannot escape from this future. I can see all the future. The future I saw won't be changed."

"I see the type of your prescience now."

"?"

Shiki's voice has some emotion. It's an instinctive pleasure like a predator licks its mouth.

"Aha. You won't understand my power. My foreseeing is absolutely right. It's unchangeable."

Meruka forced his "past" present to converge into one possibility by foreseeing the future. He was a slave going back and forth between the future and present to realize what he saw.

"Unchangeable future, huh? Is that fun?"

"I don't care. I have no intension on my own. I'm like a machine tied to the foreseen future. I'm not sure if my right or left eye sees the truth or I'm a ghost between them."

Shiki was walking across the bridge. There was a truck with a bomb parked three meter ahead of her.

"Are you playing with me?"

"Not at all. You saw my face. It's a good reason to kill you."

"You lied again. You should be around here, don't you?"

Meruka's face was taut with tension. His finger shook with nervousness.

"I said no."

"You are. You need to see the 'present' to predict the future because you bring about the foreseen future by filling the present."

That's the biggest difference between Meruka's prescience and other future-telling, which sees only the future.

"You need to be at the site. That's the absolute condition for your prescience."

"....."

That's why he failed three times. He only saw Shiki entered the places he set bombs. He didn't see her death directly. As a result, Shiki is alive.

"You should be around this time. You need to see my death to complete your prescience."

Shiki approached the truck one more step. Meruka activated the bomb. A blast blew against her. That's exactly what he foresaw.

"Shit, what a random girl!"

When the bomb exploded, Shiki jumped into the river. She calmly swam to the shore and stared at Meruka. He got frightened and ran out of the building. This is still within

my foreseen future. He shook off the fear and regained confidence. At the parking lot 15 minutes later, he vividly foresaw Shiki torn apart by his bomb.

Mirai Fukuin/ - Chapter 1

"Shall we take a rest in the cafe over there? You must be tired."

"Ah. Yes! Thank you!"

His line was nothing more than a girl hunting but this kind of man cannot have a bad intention.

"If it's not bothering, I...I'm pleased to talk. I...I have one hour before the next train!"

He smiled at me fluttering with embarrassment.

"I'll treat you. This is a reward for your brave act. Oh, I haven't introduced myself."

When I heard of his name Kokuto Mikiya, I also heard a girl's voice

"Nice to meet you, Seo-san."

flashed beneath my eyelid.

"Not so many people here..."

"The appearance of this cafe is not that friendly to a new customer. They are losing popularity although the cakes and coffee are good. Oh, do you prefer brighter atmosphere cafe, Shizune-chan?"

"Shizu...!!!!!"

Shizune-chan! He naturally called my first name!!!

"Not at all! I'm pretty fine with this cafe!"

"Good. Let's sit over there."

I shook my head to sharpen my relaxed cheek up. I followed him not because I'm tired but I had something to ask him, but....

"Here is the menu. Be careful. The coffee here is a bit hot. Too bad they don't have the blue berry pie..."

His disappointed action made my cheek relaxed again.

"ah...No, NO NO NO NO!"

"?"

I felt something different from the ordinary "already predicted thing". This feeling is close to what I left in my childhood, groping the shape in the dark.

"Why did you believe me, Kokuto-san?"

I stared at him. This question matters with my whole life.

"It's a bit hard to answer. Because Shizune-chan was desperate about it, isn't this answer satisfying for you?"

"Did you feel sorry for me?"

I knew I was testing him.

"It's true I felt sorry for you. At first I thought you were threatened by the guy. But that's my fault. What I understood at that point was there was no reason for you to tell a lie. Then, you were seriously anxious about the guy. Regardless of it being true or false, I couldn't ignore you."

"You believed me because you thought I was not telling a lie? I told something ridiculous like my intuition was right."

"Even if it sounded like a ridiculous excuse, you surely were serious. That's enough. And... I'm getting used to this kind of story."

Kokuto-san said he believed in me not what I told. I, Seo Shizune, had a deep breath and told him my life-long worry.

"I can foresee the future."

Kokuto-san looked surprised at my confession.

"ah, it's a stupid story, I know"

"No. The reason why I was surprised is my business, don't care about it. Could you explain the detail of your prescience power? Do you foresee the future like a movie?"

"oh..yes. It's more like dizziness."

"Is it lasting now?"

"No. It suddenly pops up, and the scenery changes like a slide show... I feel time flows slowly, but it lasts only for two seconds or something in the real time."

"When did you gain the power?"

"I realized it's a future telling when I was in Junior high."

"You must have had a hard time. I'm impressed with your patience, Shizune-chan."

oh no, I almost cry out again... The sadness when I foresaw the death of my dog Chris two years ago. I saw his death but I couldn't change it. I shouted with irresistible emotion.

"um....Can I call you Mikiya-san from now!?"

"Sure"

I shouted with joy in my mind.

Mirai Fukuin/ - Chapter 2

"I know it's not polite to consult with a person met first today, but could you help me?"

"It's o.k. by me. I'm not sure I'm reliable for your trouble, though."

"Don't laugh at me, please. To tell the truth, I can foresee the future."

I had been prepared for it, but I was still astonished by her confession. No wonder she was extremely nervous because she was telling her secret to a newly met man.

"Can I call you Mikiya-san from now?"

This kind of sudden remark should result from her extreme nervousness.

"Sure, you can choose whichever you want. So then, how long future ahead can you foresee?"

"I can see the future as scenery up to three days ahead. I sometimes have a kind of vague vision. It's about one month or one year in the future."

"So you have a limit. Which kind of vision do you see more frequently?"

"As for the three day future scenery, I have twice or three times a day. I rarely have the longer ones."

The way she talked and what she told me made me understand her anxiety. She felt herself inferior to others due to her power.

"Have you ever had a good experience with your power?"

"I can foresee the question of the exams beforehand, so I had been ranked top in the marks. It's cheating because I'm not smart at all."

She murmured as if she was apologizing to other classmates.

"I see. You think you cannot handle your talent."

"Right. It's too much for me."

Her distress must be deeper than that. She has resigned herself to the foreseen future.

"One more thing, do you fear to see the future?"

"I don't know. The future telling has already become a natural thing for me, but I'm

afraid of seeing the worst future someday."

...the death of myself or my precious person

"But you haven't seen such future, yet. Right?"

"ah... No, but I don't wanna see something like today's accident. So I've been always frightened or um... feeling gloomy. But I set it aside from my business... I have not confidence in myself...sorry I cannot put it to words. I'm not sure if I really feel fear for the future telling."

"That's different from fear, it's simply a..."

"Simply what?"

Well, it's too early to tell the conclusion to her. I need to reward to her courageous confession.

"I keep it until the end of the talk. Shall I resume the story about the prescience?"

I've already gotten the information on the type and length of her future telling. The remaining question is about the conditions.

"Have you visited Mifune town before?"

"Yes, it's relatively close to my school."

"When did you see the guy first?"

"I talked to him after I saw the future. Before that...um...I don't remember...did I pass him by at the bus stop??"

"You and he took the same bus and you got off right after him, didn't you?"

"Oh, yes, you're right!"

"I see. That's make sense, if I quote from Touko-san."

"Yes?"

I took a name card out of my wallet and wrote down a short sentence on the back.

"???"

Leaving Shizune-chan puzzled with my strange action, I placed the name card on the table.

"This is the last question. Are you afraid of your ability to see the future or do you fear that you cannot change your fate on your own?"

She answered indecisively after thinking for some while.

"I'm afraid of both, but I would choose the latter."

"Good. I assured you that there is nothing to worry about your ability. Take more pride in yourself. You can see that kind of future as much as you want."

"What!? Are you really listening to me? I don't..."

"Your prescience is not a bad one. There may be such a troublesome future teller somewhere in the world, but you are not."

"?"

There is no good or bad about person's talent, but I can see whether the talent works in a good or bad way to him or her.

"This is secondhand information; there are several types of prescience ability..."

I started to give her the lecture I had the other day.

+++++

The shocking news of no salary for July was withdrawn at the end of the month.

There was an unexpected income deposited to our office.

"Oh, now I remember. Before I moved to here, I did the designing of the hotel in my spare time."

Touko was so pleased with the money and attended the celebration party for the completion of the hotel along with her staff and the staff's friend A. But they were involved in a strange accident there.

A few days later, Touko and the friend A discussed how to settle this case.

"The culprit left a declaration of the crime at the site. The explosion time and range, the number of casualties, and the description of the injuries. It's more like a report than a crime statement."

"A report, huh? He did his job in a businesslike way."

"The strange thing is why this businesslike bomber is after us. Where were you at the night?"

"Just I walked out around there. Btw, did the report predict the future?"

"Yes, he must be a psychic with prescience."

The magician unpleasantly replied.

+++++(Touko's long lecture...)

"Boss, does the prescience power really exist?"

"Yes. The word prescience include multiple types of ability but it's basically a power to see something, not includes dubious things like communicating with the future or transported to a parallel world. If you restrict the prescience within the function of

human beings, the prescience is divided into 'prediction' and 'measurement'.

Prediction is more common. In a high level case, the predicted future is envisioned in the brain."

"Wait. If it's true, it's almost impossible to catch this bomber even for the police, isn't it?"

"No, it's possible. Even if he can see the future, there is a physical limit in the human ability. He cannot escape from the siege by the police unless he can fly. But the police give out information too much. They are good prey of the future teller.

If they are to catch him, use a prolonged strategy pouring enormous number of human resources, or rely on an unexpected unlucky event."

"Unexpected unlucky event...something like a traffic accident?"

"Correct. Something beyond the expectation in a daily life will work.and being attacked by the 'human disaster' is the most unexpected one. Prescience doesn't mean you really 'see' the future. You cannot see what you don't expect."

"...? They are not seeing the future? But they 'see' the future, right?"

"It's a mere prediction. For example, assume there are two people here. B will kill A the day after tomorrow. A prescience psychic can see the crime scene by looking at the two even if he doesn't know their names and faces or the reason for the murder."

"Hey, if he knows the outcome without knowing the reason, that's just an intuition."

Touko gave a cold smile to Shiki, who seemed like saying "I can also do that".

"Don't mix it up with your case, Shiki. Yours is a kind of sixth sense knowing the result by imagination. On the other hand, the prescience is based on solid basis and evidences.

Listen. Human being evolved building up the culture and systematic knowledge and abandoning useless physical functions.

Prescience is ability what we supposed to throw away long ago.

Those future tellers unconsciously record all the information they received from the sight; words, smell, tempo, even a stain on the wall. When the huge information is mixed and takes a form of inevitable outcome, they foresee the future. It's just an intellectual processing. It's not extraordinary ability like Shiki's. They are normal people partially retrogressed."

"Retrogressed? But they have such a wonderful power."

"Human beings make a wise choice of information from the environment. The civilized society is too complicated to comprehend fully. Originally, the world can be perceived as an integration of all the five sensations. But it's useless. Personalization and adaptation are the most essential superiority of us human beings. We don't pay attention to what is unrelated to us in order to save the mental strength. We found from one thousand years of evolution that selecting beneficial information from the environment is the most efficient way to evolve fast.

Let's go back to the example of the murder case. Seeing either the victim A or the murderer B alone gives the prediction of the murder. This is the result of perceiving A's life style and even an unconscious sensation of danger of A. If the psychic turns on the ability all the time, his brain will be overflowed with information. Prescience is not necessary anymore. Someday an artificial intelligence will catch up with human prediction ability."

They are not looking at the future a few minutes ahead, but the outcome a few minutes later resulting from the present conditions.

"I see...but this bomber is different. He doesn't see anything."

"? We cannot call it a prediction if he sees the future without any basis. It's an arrogation of the common sense."

"It's complicated. Touko, what's the difference between the prediction and measurement?"

Measurement is useful especially to criminals. Prediction is a rightful power of human. The easier prey for Shiki is

"Well, it's no use talking about assumptions. Could you bring a tea for me, Mikiya-kun? I'm thirsty now."

"Sure. But what are we supposed to do if we meet a psychic with prescience?"

"If he is the prediction type, just leave him. Nothing harmful to the society. If we properly advise them, they can manage to live with us."

Mirai Fukuin/ - Chapter 3

Mikiya-san explained me the difference between measurement and prediction. Measurement is an act of piling up the future and prediction is an act of perceiving the future. He said my prescience was prediction type.

"They made a tasty one today."

I didn't notice he ordered a meat pie. ...We have been talking about a serious matter.

"I don't feel myself having a good memory. I'm not smart, either."

"If you are aware of it, it's dangerous for you. The function of prescience should be isolated from the consciousness."

He kept on swallowing the meat pie. I cannot take it anymore!

"Excuse me! Could you bring me this orange and sunflower mixed pie, please?"

Mikiya-san smiled at me.

"Well, you can forget about what I said. It's all secondhand knowledge. I can say to you only one thing."

"What...what is that?"

"Shizune-chan is not that special. You don't have to worry about it."

That's what I don't wanna hear from him. The words of encouragement lowered my body temperature like cold water.

"You can say such a thing because you cannot see the future."

I barely held my words "You don't understand my feeling".

"To tell the truth, I can see the future a little."

That's a terrible betrayal. This man must be a devil. His clothes are all black.

"No kidding. You cannot deceive me....what?"

Mikiya-san showed me the name card. To my surprise, it read "Shizune-chan will order the orange pie."

"See? I did it."

"....yes, but..."

This is a kiddish magic.

"Don't fool me. Anyone can predict the future by guessing. I see the unchangeable future."

"If you're correct, the case with the guy was not prescience. The future you foresaw and the actual result were different."

I stunned.

"Ah...yes, we saved him."

"It's you who saved him. You saw the road construction and the bag of the guy on the bus. When he headed for the construction site, all the pieces of information formed a prediction. It's basically the same as my prediction on this name card."

It's just a matter of length you foresee. No need to worry about it. As you said just now, anyone can predict the future."

Mikiya-san's words washed away dirt from my mind.

"Is it really normal?"

"Yes, anyone lives looking ahead; five minutes, one day, one week or even one year future. It's not as certain as prescience, merely a vague wish. But everybody dreams of the future based on him in the present."

Future is something we can only wish for.

"My foreseen future were always bitter ones. I'm not smiling there. But that means..."

"Your prescience power probably warns you of the possible painful future."

+++++

"I got your point, but it's not good to know the questions of the exams beforehand."

"Yes, so think about four days in the future not three days."

"What do you mean by that?"

"The limit of your foreseeing is up to three days, right? Then think about beyond the limit. It'll be difficult but you can take it as a compensation for your special power."

I saw a devil's black tail behind Mikiya-san. He pointed out my anxiety and weakness at the same time. If you have time to pondering about the power, overcome it first. He warmly and also sharply told me to stop thinking like a loser like 'I'm sorry for my cheating'.

"I'm had. Mikiya-san is unexpectedly a strict person contrary to your kind looking."

Seemed like he disagree with my "kind looking" line.

"Can I have the name card? I wanna keep it as a memento."

"eh, well there is no way to use my name card, though."

He looked embarrassed and gave me the name card. I was surprised at his insight. He had already prepared to convince me at that point. Without prescience power, he made the bright future.

"Btw, this prediction a bit missed the answer."

"That's my fault. I didn't expect you chose not today's recommendation but the challenger's menu next to it."

His prescience lacked the sunflower. As you see, the uncertainty is the wonder of humanity.

Mirai Fukuin (fake) Chapter 4/

August 3 1998, 11:32 am. Ryougi Shiki entered the parking lot. Future is unchangeable anymore. In one minute, she will be distracted by the family appeared from the elevator and got 1,500 metal balls from three directions and minced into pieces.

"...hey, I catch up with you, bomber."

She talked to her cell phone and dropped it. She drew a knife from her back.

Her eyes / shined blue / and stared the surroundings filled with "future".

A child and his parents appeared from the elevator. Next moment, he pushed the button. At the same time Shiki's knife flashed in the air.

~~In one second, Ryougi Shiki got 2mm metal balls all over her body and killed instantly.~~

In one second, Kuramitsu Meruka's 'sight' disappeared as if an eyeball was slashed into two.

"AGHHHH!"

He covered his right eye feeling a sharp pain.

Ryougi Shiki approached him with no hesitation.

"HA...Why...WHY!!!"

Suddenly he lost his sight. Panicked with the pain, Meruka desperately repeated pushing the button. But the bomb didn't respond. Problem with the fuse? or wrong mixing of the components? or the electric failure of the remote controller? No, they could not happen. There was no change in the future he piled up. But the bomb was deactivated by the coincidence ignoring all of his preparations.

"It...cannot...be...!!!"

The bomber shuddered with fear for the unknown, which he'd forgotten long ago.

Meruka crouched like a fetus with the unbearable pain.

"Touko had the point. The more you know the future, the more you lose the sight. Can

you hear me, bomber? You don't need your right eye now."

He heard her voice. He tried to see the way out with his left eye, but he couldn't see his future "successfully escape from here" at all.

"If your prescience were the prediction type, you could have killed me easily. Not to mention, you see the future too clearly."

"...!.....!"

He heard her foot step within five meter. He knew he will be killed when she comes behind the car. Prescience power was not necessary to see that outcome.

"why...why....!"

He didn't feel fear for the death. He had believed in the future. He had been tied by the future. Why did the absolute belief and curse collapse now!?

"Why did the future change!?"

"It didn't change. There is no future in the present. You cannot deal with a thing which doesn't exist now."

The magician said the future "measurement" was superior to the prediction because one can intentionally determine the future. But,

"Future is invulnerable because it's not graspable. Once it takes a form, it can be broken."

The determined future is a distinctive target for Shiki.

"I cannot kill an accident, but I can kill inevitability. Good night, bomber. Your future was dead end from the beginning when you gave a form to the future."

Her footsteps echoed right next to him. Shiki raised her knife high and faced with the bomber.

"...! What? You are..."

She stunned for some seconds like a normal girl in her age and saw the last cry of the bomber.

+++++

August 3, 11: 50 am. The explosion turned real with five minutes delay. The father got small scratch to protect his family and 14 year old boy had a serious wound and was hospitalized.

After cleanly forgot about the bomber, Shiki encountered an unpleasant scene. Only God knows the reason why she didn't entered the cafe and waited outside under the strong sunlight.

Mirai Fukuin (fake) Chapter 5

The last day of the summer vacation, I went back to the dorm. Naomi welcomed me.

"Welcome back! Did you have something funny?"

"Nothing funny, but I had something new. I experienced my first broken heart!"

"What!? You mean the broken heart is that broken heart? Tell me more about it!"

After I told the story of a man with black glasses, she sighed.

"Oh, was it boring?"

"No, I'm sorry to tell you but it's not romance. "

I knew her remark three days ago.

"Do you think so?"

"It's just an admiration. You are more like a fan of an idol. Romance is something totally random and like a roller coaster leading either to a dead end or happy end.

From my experience it's"

Naomi's lecture on romance seems to last forever.

I know it was an instant's longing. I was impressed by him like a child.

"Btw, where is he from?"

The end of my romance began with the same question.

+++++

"Um, btw where are you from, Mikiya-san?"

"I have been living here since my childhood, but does it matter?"

"No, nothing. I just felt like asking this question."

Am I collecting information for the future telling?

Mikiya-san glanced outside the window. There stood a cool young man in Kimono...NO!

////

Blood, blood, blood. There filled with tremendous number of red jelly beans. Bloody metal, bloody concrete. A woman in blood and black clothes in blood.

////

".....!"

I got my sense of time blown away with the strong dizziness I've never experienced.

The woman in Kimono made me foresee the future easily.

"Shall we go out for now?"

Mikiya-san looked at his watch and picked up the slip.

I shook off the dizziness and swallowed the bloody vision.

"ah..thank you very much."

I asked him with my last courage,

"You said you know a person who has a kind of prescience power, but is it your lover?"

"What?"

I stepped on the mine by myself.

"Um...well...how can I say..."

He gazed at the beautiful girl in Kimono.

Ah...good bye, my romance. It was a short fancy dream. I know I cannot beat her. If I try one hundred times, I'll be killed one hundred and one times.

"Wow, did you see that?"

I'm almost down on my knee, but I must to tell him this.

"No, I didn't see who she is, but please don't be angry. If you keep on going around with her, you will be killed someday."

"....."

There was a five second silence, and it was a deadly freezing silence for me. Mikiya-san didn't laugh at my warning. He calmly received by foreseen future.

"I got it. Thank you, Shizune-chan."

He believed in my words and on top of that he strongly believed in his fate.

"But I don't ask you for the detail. It's scary but if I know more, I will not be able to do what I need to."

I deeply admired his courage and strength.

I parted from him in front of the cafe. From a distance I said thank you to him

speaking to the girl in Kimono and left the town.

+++++

That's the end of the story. No change in the foreseeing ability and I'm living with the sudden wave of self-hatred. Nothing changed nor settled, but I stopped worrying as much as I can. Like Mikiya-san's smile, a happy future won't come to me unless I believe in myself.

"And my brother had his head shaved before the surgery. When he woke up and saw his head, he said no hair is cool. What the hell! It's not cool. It's just a skin head..."

Naomi is now talking about her brother. She must have been desperately praying for her brother's life on the plane back home. She is now joking about the terrible past because she had never been pessimistic about the future.

"You're cool, Naomi."

"Do you think so, too? Yes, cool is better than cute. It's annoying idea of being goody-goody type. Cool & beautiful is the most fashionable now! But I don't want a skin head."

She suddenly stopped laughing. A stranger approached us.

"....what's the matter?"

We expected something like "Silence!" or "Too rude!"

"Nothing. I just wanna join you."

Her reply was totally different from what we expected.

Naomi was all choked up and I tried to foresee this noble looking girl.

"Hey you must be Seo-san. Good. I don't need to look for you to introduce myself."

For one year or longer from now, I share the room with her and will have a dynamic school life. This was the first encounter with my 'bad' buddy.

"Btw, where are you from, Kokuto-san?"

She wondered about my strange question. I felt relieved to know that the family name was coincidence. My mistake will be corrected in the far future.

Hot summer comes again. I'm gazing at the town from the roof top of the four floor building.

This building is not low but not high either. I can see the normal houses below but compared to most of the other buildings built in these ten years, this is quite a small one. As a matter of fact, this building is abandoned in the middle of the construction. Start building in 1992, and abandoned the next year. The incomplete fifth floor is now serves as a roof top.

"....!"

I unconsciously looked up and felt dizziness from the strong sunlight. I lost my right sight when I was young. Fortunately, I have been able to get by with left eye.

"It's too hot."

I stayed a bit long on the roof top. I headed for my office on the fourth floor. A girl's voice echoed in the corridor.

"And he escaped from Dr. Origa. He arrived at a festival at night. He found a spring town filled with paper lanterns, fireworks, and Sakura blossoms.

Her voice is coming from my office. She loved to read aloud the fairy tale book privately published.

"I didn't admire humans so much. But the town was so crowded and bright that I thought nobody would notice a stranger like me."

It's an unpopular short story. His books are mostly written for kids. But half of the stories leave the small readers behind. It's the case with this one, too. It's about a robot escaped from a doctor and lived with people. He didn't wanna be human. He just admired the beautiful town. In order to live in the town, he pretended to be a human.

A few years later,

"It's a strange feeling, but I feel I've become an ink recording the events."

He gained a human like mind, but couldn't get a human body. He successfully disguised face and hands but he didn't have tear and blood.

"Spring storm comes again. The fireworks bloomed in the sky as if they compete with Sakura."

At the festival night, the robot accidentally fell to the river from the bridge pushed by the crowd. The water broke the whole system and his disguise was melt away. He tried to hide his true face.

"On this special festival night, I will be kicked out. I will scare the people."

He hid his face for the sake of the people in the town. People found him and gave out cries. His neighbors were shouting at him.

"Ah...I'm a monster."

At the end he realized he was left out of the community from the beginning. Sinking in the river, gazing at the crowds on the bridge with his blurring sight

"Tears rolled down from his eyes."

This is the end of the story. The reading voice stopped. Seemed like she finished reading. I opened the door without knocking.

"Oh, Mitsuru-san. I didn't know you are here."

"I will lock the door when I leave here. I was on the roof top."

"You were there. I should have gone up there."

The girl in her white blouse smiled like a flower.

She is ten years old or something. She has long black hair and blue eyes with cuteness of a child and a rational mind of a grown up.

"....."

I was dazzled by her devilish enchantress. Anyone looks forward to see her future and at the same time wish her to be as she is now forever.

".....how about this expression? It describes your little devil in an inconspicuous way."

"It's a good one as an improvisation. But the last line is unnecessary. People will suspect you're pedo."

"No problem. I don't have any secret behind."

No matter how beautiful she is, she is a headache for me. I would throw her out of the window if it were allowed.

"You are in bad mood, Mitsuru-san. It's boring. I sneaked out of the lesson and brought a job for you."

"Unbelievable. I told you not to come here without permission and escaping from the lessons is life threatening act for me. Do you want me to be killed, young lady?"

"What? Not at all. Btw, I think 'young lady' is not comfortable for me, Mitsuru-san. It's too formal and sounds like as if I'm protected. Especially Mitsuru-san's way of saying has some bad intentions like 'I don't wanna be friendly to you more than now.' This is an order. Call me Mana-kun when we met first."

"....."

Her anachronistic lines made me depressed even more.

"Sorry, but I cannot go along with you. Please go home now. Being used by 10 year girl is not my taste."

"Good, good. I like you being a punk. Your unvarnished words are my favorite. You don't have a sensibility as a picture book writer, though."

That's not your business. Leave me alone.

I, Kamekura Mitsuru, am a 25 year old novice picture book writer. Thanks to the kind editor, I have my books published several times.

"But 'Dracula's tear' is a masterpiece. Did you burn out after the first book? The second book 'Afterglow Cage' was a waste of paper."

Dracula's tear is the book she read a while ago and I made my debut with the book. That book saved my life and we got to know each other because of it.

Two years ago, I was deeply in debt and had been pressed by the creditors. I prepared to work as a fisherman or oil digger. In the middle of such confusion, this girl appeared.

"You must be Kameruka-sensei. Nice to meet you."

She suddenly forced in with my book in her hand and the fierce face creditors left my office. Just after I felt relieved, a diabolical boss appeared and I escaped from death by becoming the member of the gang.

"Good. I need our exclusive detective office just now. You are the chief of the office. ah? You have a job as a writer? Continue it as you like. I'm not that cruel. I allow you to do some side business."

This is how I became a private detective and a picture book writer.

She saved my life and is the daughter of my Big Boss. So I don't hate her, but it'll cause a problem if we get friendly beyond some extent.

"Btw, Mana. What's the job from the gang?"

Most of the jobs are almost illegal investigations of people's private lives. Sometimes the Big Boss gives me some difficult cases, but mostly I can manage them peacefully. This time she brought something in the middle. A suspicious stranger appeared in the territory of our gang and my job is to investigate the person and tell him or her to leave immediately if I think the person is dangerous.

"A strange peddler in the back alley...is it dangerous? I cannot handle violent guy."

"My mom said she is not such kind of person. She is an unpopular fortune teller. My mom owes her, so don't treat her harshly and take care of her until the end."

I see. She gave this job to me because she wanted to avoid violence. But...

"A fortune teller in this address!?"

The downtown of Mifune. The report Mana brought has her old picture.

"My Gosh. That old lady is still alive."

"? Do you know her, Mitsuru-san?"

"I met her long ago. At that time, she was famous for her precise prediction and advice, but I haven't heard of her these days. I thought she was dead."

Supposedly she still had the 'power'.

But, in any case, her health must have declined. It's been already 10 years. She should be around 70.

"Oh, my. This report says she can predict the future. Is this really true?"

She looked like doesn't understand the meaning of "predicting the future".

"Most of the prescience are fake, but she is real. She doesn't need information processing or piling up the actions. She can foresee the future without any information."

Her eyes sparkled with curiosity. I realized I made a stupid mistake, but it's too late. I can easily see what she will do next.

+++++

At night, I set out for work. South Mifune is a good-old downtown. Nothing has changed for these 10 years.

"I'm surprised. You adults all stay up so late."

Mana was looking at the town at night with great curiosity. She walked about as if she was dancing.

It was 11pm. I already told about this to her family, but Mr. Suzurigi will mad at me about this going out on the town late at night. He is her overseer.

"Mana, this way. Stay with me. We'll enter a dark place."

At the end of the narrow dark back alley, I saw a fortune teller in a black robe.

"Welcome. Do you let me tell your fortune. Onii-san?"

"Hello! Hello! Nice to meet you, fortune-teller-san! Do you see the fortune of a minor?"

"Oh, my. I thought there only stands a stern look guy, but here comes a cute customer. Sure. sure. It's free of charge for girls."

"Thank you very much! Could you tell me the fortune of the love between me and my dad?"

Mana faced with the old lady free from worry. The fortune teller joyfully gazed into the crystal ball. I saw she got old form the manner she had been doing for decades. She could barely see the girl in front of her.

"Well, no need to tell the fortune. He loves you deeply enough. It'll be ethically not good if you're loved more than now."

"I knew it. It's my goal that I beat my mom someday and bring my dad back to me." She told a headaching joke with a bright smile like a sunflower. The old fortune teller looked happy although the conversation didn't work at all. She surely hadn't had a customer for long.

"You've fallen, Mother Mifune. You think it's outdated to give an advice to avoid the unlucky future?"

"Oh? Hi, there. Long time no see. You are in the same trade. I mean, you were." She looked at me with narrowed eyes. She hasn't fallen. She saw my history that much although she was not able to see my face in the dark.

She was right. I've already quitted....

"No, I meant about me, not you. I cannot see the future anymore. You're right. Mother Mifune is no different from being dead."

"? Can't you see the future?"

Mana saw the old ladies face sadly... no, interested.

"No, I can't see the bright future anymore. It's alright with me. I was relieved of my heavy responsibilities. But in exchange, I started to see the past. What a twist of fate." I understood the reason why she got unpopular now. Nobody wanna look back the dark unpleasant past.

"That's how things changed along with the time. Your fortune telling won't be popular, old lady. You'd better stop it. You're , how can I say,..." left behind the time. People no longer feel romanticism from the pure hope.

"Well, how about you, man? Have you changed in these ten years?"

Me? Let me see... I have changed. But I just lost one of the functions. Have I been hiding in this town for ten, no, twelve years like the robot pretended to be a human? I met a precious friend, lost him and succeeded him, but all I have is one reader who complains to my works.

"It's shameful, but I haven't changed much. I have been doing wasteful jobs. I'm still a little punk."

On that day, I felt as if I turned into a human from a robot, but essentially I had been the same. The only change in life was I stopped causing trouble to the society. I haven't contributed to someone else.

"You're wrong. Mitsuru-san is a good man. Be confident in yourself!"

Mana scolded me in a serious face.

"That's honorable of me. But why do you think so?"

"Because you look like my dad. Plain looking, lost right sight, weak to girls...I'm good at using such a man."

"....."

HAHAHAHAHA! The old lady burst into laughing. All I could do is letting my empty mind go.

"Mind your age, old lady. You laugh so hard."

She kept on laughing.

"HA! HA! Good to live long. You become so human-like. I see. You had a good ten years."

Who knows? I don't remember what happened one year ago, although I kept the good thing and the bad thing securely in my mind.

"Anyway, it's troublesome if you keep doing your business here. Next time fierce looking men will come. Retire before they come. After all, you must be rich. You have been telling the fortune for free for long."

"None of your business. I've been doing this job before you were born. Even if it's troublesome and no customers, I'll do this until I die."

My persuasion was failed. She would not follow the order of others, to say nothing of me. I failed but I did my job. Leave the rest of the work to the other gang members. They will handle this better than I.

"Mana, let's go home. Time to sleep."

"Wait. One question. You said you are virtually dead. Then why do you keep on

telling the fortune? You would have been happy for being free from the foreseeing."

She curled her lips. The face had some nostalgia. She replied in a tired voice

"I don't know. It's true my work has been painful. My life was all eaten by the future and nothing left to me. But my power has no way to use other than to make people happy."

"....."

My life was changed by a girl. I was released from the tie of determined future. I got a life full of failures in return, but something left in me. The old lady had not encountered such change in the life, but she devoted herself to the job she believed in.

"Hey, Mitsuru-san. Do me a favor?"

She gave her brightest smile to me. I have never been able to go against this smile.

"I can at least listen to you. Tell me what you have."

"I think her job is great. We need Mother Mifune in this town. Moreover, I love her."

"It's a bad habit of you to love whoever you see. And what do you want?"

"It's a bad habit of you to ask me what you've already know. Should I put it to words?"

"No, thanks. I'll be depressed if you do."

It's impossible to cheat her mother. I have to persuade her with all of my strength.

That's not enough. I need to make her prosperous as a fortune teller. "Take care of her to the end" means all of these.

"It'll be a tough job. To begin with, do you agree with her plan, old lady?"

"You don't need care about me. I just keep on doing what I want to."

"See? She agreed with us. Mitsuru-san with glasses will settle all the troubles. Or shall I call you Kuramitsu then?"

"You...."

That name made me headache.

It was ten years ago.

There was a man who couldn't choose one future because he could foresee a success. He lost himself whether he lived in the present or for the future. And he became a slave of his own future. It's like a mind-less robot just following the orders from the future.

He became a machine-like bomber, made money for five years, and killed by a

homicidal maniac. Kuramitsu Meruka was surely killed there by being slashed the future binding himself along with his right eye.

The bomber was defeated and the maniac tried to kill him.... but lost interest after seeing him in crouch, and left there like a fickle cat.

The casualty in the bomb case was two people. One is a man, who protected his family. The other is a 14 year old boy, who was not involved in the explosion but injured his right eye for unknown reason.

The pseudonym Kuramitsu Meruka was borrowed from a comic book. He wanted to keep his identity by choosing an anagram as his false name. Meruka is gone. I cannot foresee the future anymore. I just do the mockery of the foreseeing as an ordinary human.

"Well, it sounds better than destroying something."

I answered in a dejected voice.

She smiled and took my hand.

"It's a deal! Feel relaxed, Ma'am. He looks unreliable now, but one he turns on, he really carry things through."

"Hey, wait, little girl. I know his name, but you haven't given your name to me."

She apologized to the old lady and bowed.

"I'm Mana, Ryoudgi Mana, my lovely fortune teller. My mom...rather my dad owes you a lot."

The old lady seemed so surprised and stared at her. She blinked her eyes with no sight.

"Ah...I see. That's an impressive quirk of fate."

The fortune teller showed her a calm smile as if she was looking at a bright future.

"Take care. Well, this is not what I'm supposed to say."

"You, too. I wish you good health."

And Mana took my hand.

I made my farewell to her by my eyes. The desk of the fortune teller looked dignified. Maybe her story had some finale by meeting Mana. The story where I was the main ended ten years ago, but I have some jobs left to do as a supporting character.

"Let's set out for work, Mitsuru-san. First, we need to persuade my mom."

"That's the toughest job."

Anyway, a robot has its own job as a robot. My future is still filled with hope and anxiety. Even if I won't get the spotlight, the stage will go on with many main characters.

The story goes on. My future is right in front of my left eye.

Mirai Fukuin Chapter 0

January 1996. He was enjoying the free time under the cloudy sky. He walked about the town with his favorite red jacket, which he took without her permission. His mind was filled with the desire to kill or be killed.

She was in deep sleep. He went out to the town at night because he felt his end coming.

She had started to collapse.

I have no choice other than being destroyed.

I must protect.

Someone must be protected.

She suffered from the contradiction, but he didn't care much about it. He had already realized the ultimate way to save her. In essence, if I disappear she'll be able to live happily ever after. So there is nothing to care about. He enjoyed the night town as if he was a dragon singing the praise of its short life, or a small child who cries 'I don't wanna die!'.
""I'm not afraid of death."

He talked to himself. It was not a bluff. Even if he dies, she survives and this body remains alive. So he was afraid of different things. He feared for losing the blue sky in the lunch break and the red sunset after school.

Those admirations to the world through that boy were so precious for him....

"Hello. Could you let me tell your fortune, Onii-san?"

He stopped walking. There was a knife in the right pocket. I'm in bad mood tonight. So I will kill her if I have a chance.

He knew her. She was a fortune teller and gave an advice to avoid the unlucky future.

"Ha!"

Who do you think you are? He firmly held the knife.

"Sounds interesting. Tell me the fortune."

He showed his left hand. She looked at his hand and leaned her head many times.

"Hey, tell me what you saw. How can I avoid the bad fate?"

His words had a thirst for blood, expecting she tells a boring her last words.

"..... I haven't seen the future like this. There is no future for you. You will die no matter what you do."

He was impressed by the early death sentence, which he had long been prepared for.

"...I'm surprised. You are real."

I'm sorry, she sighed.

He drew his hand and seethe back. She was still staring at his future.

"Hey, stop it. I don't wanna be survived. I feel refreshed now. I leave now."

"No, that's not what I mean. Strange. It's certain you will be dead in any case, but..."

"?"

The fortune teller looked puzzled. She foresaw his future with her absolute prescience.

"You'll disappear soon. It cannot be helped. Nothing left. Nothing blessed. But, your dream will keep living on."

She saw his last wish.

"....."

A slight pleasure and a pain in the mind.

He sadly smiled and put his hand to his pocket.

"Bye, old lady. Take care. It's too dangerous for the old like you."

+++++

He left the narrow back alley. Walking along the river and headed home surrounded by the bamboo forest. The clouds are almost falling down. He remembered a classmate. His whistle got better and turned into a familiar song.

"....Your dream will keep living on...."

Alright. That's fine. She understood that affirmation is the answer if we love a person. But he couldn't agree with it. He would have never been able to get something he admired. He was afraid of losing it. But if the future of her and the boy is promised, my dream will live on.

"Oh well, how suitable it is for me that there is no hope in the future. "

He laughed innocently.

He walked home alone dancing in the rain.

The End.